

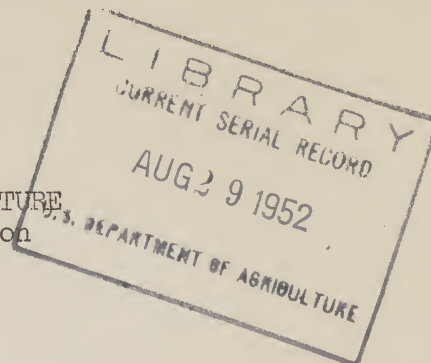
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Research Administration
Bureau of Animal Industry
Washington 25, D. C.



ANNUAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT REPORT

August 22, 1952

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I. Completed Projects.

RMA beef cattle breeding research activities conducted in cooperation with 18 State Agricultural Experiment Stations have been consolidated, for direct supervision purposes, at Denver, Colorado. This move was made to coordinate more closely the activities of all cooperating States and to relate these cooperative activities to the Bureau's continuing programs in this field.

A new type of field station report has been instituted to provide current information regarding developments affecting programs and operation of the Animal Husbandry Division. These reports cover items of project planning and operation, policy, public relations and contact operation. This information is a valuable aid in the overall direction of the Division's programs and assists greatly in carrying out administrative management phases of the work.

Another RMA project dealing with cattle parasites in the South is conducted cooperatively with the Texas and Georgia Agricultural Experiment Stations. The supervision of this work has been placed under the Bureau Animal Disease Research Laboratory. The laboratory phase of this activity is concerned with basic studies of the biology of cattle parasites, whereas the State work applies biological facts elicited through research to cattle parasite control. The coordination of both phases of work under one supervisory head will mean that laboratory facts may quickly be tested in the field under farm conditions and that fundamental control questions regarding the biology of parasites in the field may be referred to the laboratory for prompt solution.

A Master Memorandum of Understanding has been developed which contains all necessary legal and basic requirements for any cooperative undertaking. Approval has been obtained for the use of the master memorandum which will considerably systematize negotiation of the Bureau's cooperative programs with the assurance that greater uniformity will be obtained in all activities of this nature.

The third and fourth classes to train veterinarians in the differential diagnosis of vesicular diseases have been completed. Each class was composed of ten Bureau and two Canadian veterinarians. It is interesting to note that the third class was well under way when the outbreak of foot-and-mouth in Canada was announced by the government of that country. Members of each class spent a month of intensive laboratory work, study and lectures in order that they could be added to the group of previously trained veterinarians located in all parts of the United States. These men are subject to immediate call by any Bureau or State official with reason to believe foot-and-mouth or any other vesicular disease exists. Diagnosis of these diseases is difficult to determine because symptoms of foot-and-mouth disease, for example, resemble vesicular stomatitis very closely. This latter disease is not nearly as serious and does not constitute as great a threat to the livestock industry as does foot-and-mouth disease.

Considerable progress has been made during the last fiscal year to improve techniques used by Meat Inspectors in Charge. A series of regional meetings was held to help them carry out their supervisory, employee relations and training activities. Such meetings have paid large dividends in that these Inspectors recognize the responsibilities placed upon them and are handling more and more local problems with packing plants on their own initiative in accordance with instructions and regulations.

A first draft of the Meat Inspection Manual has been in use for the past year and has been widely acclaimed as bringing about a major improvement in operational instructions. Comments and suggestions are being incorporated into a final revision which should go to press very soon.

The previously reported program to mechanically tabulate production reports has been extended to the reporting, tabulating and filing of labels approved for use in connection with meat and meat food products. As a result, the operating efficiency of this work has been increased tremendously and the need for approximately 45 filing cabinets has been eliminated. This has been accomplished by photographic reduction of labels to a size permitting the pictures to be specially mounted on punch cards which also contain all necessary information about each label. Over 10,000 approved labels have been handled in this manner and an index prepared of them.

In the field of animal disease control and eradication, several projects require mention. The ABR, or Milk Ring Test, previously reported in the experimental stage, has been accepted as an official testing method for the detection of brucellosis infected herds. This simple method of identifying infected herds through the testing of composite milk samples has resulted in a real saving in veterinary personnel because it may be performed by technicians under veterinary supervision. Use of the test eliminates the need for individual blood tests on the majority of herds. Fifteen States and Puerto Rico

are using the ABR Milk Test and there is an increased demand for its use in several other States.

A managerial problem of greatest importance to the Bureau concerns improvement of the efficiency of operations and better utilization of personnel in the field. During the year a systematic review was made of operations at public stockyards operating under Bureau supervision to ascertain whether activities at each yard justified continuing Bureau inspection. As a result, inspection was withdrawn from two stockyards where it no longer appeared justified.

A study was also conducted of stations supervising the production of veterinary biological products. With the development of hog-cholera vaccines in increasing numbers and volumes and with the increase of establishments producing them, stations supervising these production operations were grouped together. In addition, other stations were abolished or consolidated. The degree of actual inspection activities has been increased at no additional cost but with actual savings through the more effective utilization of assigned personnel.

In the Washington office, filing procedures and systems have been developed or revised so as to improve service in this connection. The subject numeric system has been applied to several phases of the Bureau's work and other phases will be included during the current fiscal year.

The Bureau employs approximately 175 cooperatively controlled agents in connection with research programs. In the past these agents have been re-appointed each fiscal year with the usual processing, posting and filing of personnel actions. At the beginning of the current fiscal year these agents were appointed on an indefinite basis with a resulting saving in later years in the operations necessary to effect the appointments.

Certificates of commendation have been awarded Divisions and field stations contributing to the success of the Bureau's Safety Program during 1951. Approximately 200 stations maintaining an accident frequency rate of Zero, or which reduced lost-time accidents by 25% from the preceding year received certificates.

All field stations have received for the first time an index of all Bureau forms together with other forms prescribed for use in issued instructions or regulations. Those forms used only by certain types of stations are indicated so that the index may be of practical use in determining those forms available for certain purposes.

II. Continuing Projects.

As a result of curtailed research funds, the Bureau was faced with the prospect of eliminating work which had been in progress for a number of years. To avoid losing altogether some of the benefits of past years' research, which would inevitably result from a breach in the

continuity of investigational work, efforts were made to continue work on a partial basis with greatly reduced personnel in order to realize on previous research investments. As an example, one of the more costly projects is concerned with trichomoniasis, a parasite in cattle. Such a project is costly because the experimental cattle require maintenance for a year or longer in a single experiment. Involved are attendants to care for the animals, to make and record daily observations as well as the provision of adequate housing and feed. This project could not be continued by the Bureau and because the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station had started a very modest cooperative project in the same field, this project was strengthened and enlarged. As a result, most of the Bureau research on bovine trichomoniasis is carried on cooperatively by that State with a very minor financial contribution by the Bureau.

Whenever possible, work on several related projects which have a common goal has been closely correlated in order to expedite procedures and find solutions to problems as rapidly as is consistent with sound scientific procedures. For example, in connection with investigations of scouring in lambs, personnel carrying out fundamental biological research on sheep parasites are working closely with others engaged in chemotherapeutic research. Together, these two groups have accelerated progress and their combined effort is rapidly leading to an answer to the problem.

The Mexico-United States Commission for the Eradication of Foot-and-Mouth Disease has organized 9,364 vigilante committees of 170,777 Mexicans throughout the country to report sick animals to Commission personnel. These committees have been established in anticipation of the drastic reduction of Mexican and American personnel on approximately September 1, 1952, coincident with the opening of the Mexican-United States border. During a period of watchful waiting to assure that additional possible outbreaks are reported immediately, it is desirable that all animals displaying symptoms of foot-and-mouth disease be examined by qualified Commission personnel. Obviously, Commission personnel cannot inspect the 17,000,000 animals in the quarantine zone and the vigilante Committees are performing an increasing number of inspections. Sick animals are reported to local Mexican inspectors who, in turn, report suspicious cases to the Commission for further examination. In January, for example, 60% of the 22,514 inspections were performed by Committee members, while in May 76% of 202,560 inspections were made by Committee members. This is one major step taken by the Commission to develop a sense of responsibility among the Mexican people for continuing the fight against foot-and-mouth disease.

Previous management improvement reports have emphasized the acute shortage of veterinary personnel which has grown most serious in recent years. We are expanding the trainee program this year and hope to hire almost twice the number of undergraduate veterinary students during the coming summer months. In the past we have had difficulty operating this program

because in the spring when commitments for summer employment must be made, so much uncertainty has existed regarding the financial situation for the ensuing fiscal year. This handicap would be alleviated if funds could be earmarked for use two years in advance rather than on the present year-to-year basis.

Another phase of the recruitment problem has to do with rapidity of promotions in government service as compared to the increased salaries paid veterinarians in other employment. In an attempt to at least partially help this situation, the Civil Service Commission has authorized the promotion of veterinarians from GS-7 (the entrance grade) to GS-9 after 6 months instead of one year, provided a vacancy exists and they have completed a specialized 6 month training program agreed to by the Commission which includes a detail of between 30 and 60 days to a GS-9 position.

A continuing objective regarding the certification of animal food has to do with improving the effectiveness of the inspection supervision routine exercised over the actual preparation of such food in the plant. Issued instructions identify and emphasize the responsibilities of the plant inspectors and the field station inspector. Constant review at the division level assures the execution of these responsibilities and also improves the efficiency of the plant inspector's control and provides for the most economical use of inspection personnel.

Special conferences have been arranged during fiscal 1953 with Veterinary Meat Inspectors in Charge who are being considered for positions of greater responsibility as well as for those having particular operating problems. These conferences are designed to develop inspectors who will accept the responsibilities desired of them, to improve their efficiency and personnel relations programs.

A Supervisory Replacement Training Program has been developed to meet the problem of replacing field employees who will retire in the next several years by establishing a limited number of GS-11 training positions. The plan includes the establishment of minimum qualifications standards, techniques for selection, and a program of training, with emphasis on the management aspects of the future retiree's job. Initiation of the plan has been delayed as a result of budgetary limitations but it will be instituted as soon as is fiscally possible.

Thousands of padlocks are used in packing plants throughout the country, each with a special key, to maintain proper control over restricted products. Only a few supervisory employees have been permitted to use master keys in the past. Considerable experience has proved that adequate control may be exercised by using padlocks with master keys. The padlocks used heretofore cost \$3.25 each, but a satisfactory special lock with a master key fitting all of them has been obtained at a cost of 67¢ each.

For many years a Federal quarantine has been in force covering four Louisiana parishes and twelve Mississippi counties where sheep scabies are prevalent. Because an increased appropriation has permitted an all-out intensive eradication program to be instituted, work in both States has been placed under the direction of a single Inspector in Charge who has been able to develop a smoother and more efficient working organization. Every effort is being made to systematically dip all sheep in these areas so that in approximately two years, or when progress justifies, the quarantine may be lifted.

With the development of new modified virus vaccines, Inspectors in Charge engaged in the work of supervising the manufacture of these new vaccines participated in a series of supervisory training conferences particularly directed to problems peculiar to the new modified virus vaccines and their relationship to inspection activities, employee training and development, performance requirements and the many other related problems. This series laid the foundation for common understanding of new practices and procedures and will be followed by other conferences as the need arises for further discussion of similar problems.

Participation in the employee suggestions program continued active throughout the year despite the fact that less than \$1000 was paid out for 17 adopted suggestions, out of a total of 72 suggestions considered. In addition, 4 employees and one organizational unit were awarded the Departments Superior Service Award for accomplishments of unusual value and one major organizational unit received the Distinguished Service Award for notably outstanding contributions to Agriculture.

In compliance with GSA regulations, it is necessary that all files and records in Bureau field stations be surveyed and inventoried by June 30, 1954. Such a project will be of great value to the Bureau in that space and equipment will be released when disposable or retireable records are handled in accordance with existing approved schedules.

The documentation of all Bureau research projects will, when completed, provide complete and accurate documentation of all facts, observations and findings since the inception of each project. Completion will require exhaustive research by records analysts with individual project leaders and, depending on the personnel available for this assignment, will take a considerable period to finish.

Efforts to develop an adequate real property and building maintenance program have continued, limited by availability of personnel to conduct surveys and to complete their analysis. Necessary plans for repairs or replacements of existing facilities have been accomplished as necessary and as funds for completing construction work have been available.

Forms and instructions used in Washington and the field have received

constant attention to simplify, combine, or obsolete them. On the basis that man-hours saved in understanding instructions and executing forms will permit additional work to be performed, or less overtime, we are continuing our attention in this field. Particularly is this important since over 50% of the Bureau's field stations have less than 10 total employees and over 50% have no administrative employees.

III. Proposed Projects.

Approximately as many tuberculous cattle are located through routine post-mortem examinations conducted by Meat Inspectors as are revealed through the tuberculin testing program. Information concerning those located through post-mortem examination is forwarded to the Bureau station in the State from which the animal originated, together with all possible identification markings. This information, when traced to the farm of origin, provides a means of spot testing which has become most productive insofar as discovery of tuberculous herds is concerned. The great problem preventing full use of information obtained through post-mortem examinations is based on the fact that incomplete or incorrect identification prevents the tracing of many cases back to the farm of origin. For the most part, corrective action must be accomplished by laws or regulations of the several States. In any event, benefits to be derived from adequate and uniform identification of all animals to be slaughtered will continue to be pointed out to all States in order that they may see the value in disease control and eradication practices.

With the proposed opening of the Mexico-United States border on September 1, 1952, a major factor responsible for preventing the spread of foot-and-mouth disease from Mexico to the United States will be concluded. Since the fall of 1947, approximately 2,000 miles of border have been patrolled with jeeps, airplanes and on horseback, using a total of approximately 600 employees. This number will be reduced to about 45 roving enforcement officers who will assist in passing stock through designated ports of entry as well as in enforcing tick, scabies and import regulations. The success of the border patrol could not have been attained without the cooperation and assistance of employees of the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Entomology and Plant Quarantine.

Approximately 1400 Bureau veterinarians in the field are focal points for advice and statements pertaining to the Bureau's over-all activities which are closely related to practically every phase of the livestock interests of the country. In addition to these veterinarians may be considered a large number of lay personnel with sincere interests in activities related to livestock in a special or in a most general way. Each of these employees is looked to by local interested groups ranging from producers to consumers for advice and assistance which frequently ask for news about Bureau activities in these fields. At the present time these employees are not well posted concerning activities of the Bureau other than those in which they are personally

engaged and cannot speak advisedly about Bureau programs. Local papers, farm magazines or trade papers often do not publish material sent them, or it may be greatly colored, if published. To help eliminate this void of knowledge about Bureau objectives and programs at the field level, some means or vehicle needs to be found and used to make known to every level those facts about Bureau undertakings which local groups expect our employees to be acquainted with.